



UWI TODAY

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES • ST AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

SUNDAY 12 JULY 2026



Wading into Glory

Team St Augustine swimmer Kaetlyn Audain cuts through the water at the National Aquatic Centre in Couva on May 25 at The UWI Games 2026. Kaetlyn was a member of the campus's championship-winning swim team that bested competitors from all five campuses. Held from May 22 to 29, UWI Games was a sporting celebration of campus pride and Caribbean identity. Ultimately, the outstanding student-athletes of The UWI Mona Campus took the overall championship trophy, but the games were a victory for all participants, on and off the field of play. PHOTO: KC MEDIA LTD





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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

True to Ourselves, True to the Sport



UWI Today is pleased to share this excerpt of the address delivered by UWI St Augustine Campus Principal Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine on May 29 at the closing ceremony of UWI Games 2026.

About 40 years ago, I stood in your shoes representing my

campus, Cave Hill, in the Netball Squad and in the choir, Cavite Chorale. So, the UWI Games are nostalgic for me. This was a huge, very expensive effort, and looking around at the faces and still enduring excitement, I can see that you thought it was well worth it.

The intense planning, the training, the hard work of the local and regional organising committees, as well as the sponsors and supporters, made it happen.

I offer huge congratulations to all of the winners; and congratulations and well done to all of the participants. You all made this a glorious event. The support was far greater than we imagined. We could see and hear the enthusiasm, energy, and joy.

You athletes have been amazing! You pushed through sore muscles, blistering heat and sudden showers, and long days and short nights. You faced doubts and setbacks and never gave up, showing us what true resilience looks like. This is how you unlock your true potential.

Give yourselves a round of applause.

Make Sport but Don't Play Games

What you have done is more than a game. It applies to everything in your life. Life will always throw you the unexpected. It takes courage to manoeuvre your

What you have done is more than a game. It applies to everything in your life. Life will always throw you the unexpected. It takes courage to manoeuvre your way past it. More than the medals and the scores, we celebrate the spirit in which you competed.

way past it. More than the medals and the scores, we celebrate the spirit in which you competed.

Indeed, sport has always been one of the ways we have confronted the self-doubt and negativity colonialism burdened us with.

We hear often that sport develops the individual. I have been reflecting deeply on what that means and the lessons sport teaches us. Honour, courage, fairness, reliability, and decency—we find them on the sports field. It is in the Games where we cannot afford to play games. We have to be true. True to ourselves, true to the sport. Play sports but don't play games.

In sport, rewards come only from genuine merit, hard work and discipline. Being able to count on others, genuine allies, is what matters. Yes, some will let you down, but you move forward anyway.

It is in the sporting arena that you see clearly that the goal is for the team, the greater good. Indeed, you can run ahead and take that shot to goal by yourself, but it works better if you set up the collective goal (pun intended) together. Each has a valuable part to play.

Sport is a true test of character. So, at a university where we strive to create the total person—the worthy achiever—sport remains important.

Caribbean Unity

Your time here gave you the chance to meet up with your regional neighbours—not to mention taste the doubles, corn soup, and pelau. Caribbean people know the power of sport to unite us, underscoring that while we come from different territories, campuses, and cultures, we are part of one extraordinary region.

I hope The UWI will continue to create ways for us to get to know and value each other, smashing the borders that restrict us, so that our regional unity can build and shine, especially now at a time when it appears fragile. We must work with each other.

Gratitude

This is not a vote of thanks, and many prominent people have been thanked already, the Deputy Principals who chaired, the Organising Committees, etc. I want to acknowledge the many who worked tirelessly behind the scenes; the people who made this happen and made you all feel welcome. I see DFM, ushers, drivers like my own, servers, hall staff, medics, and event planners. There are many unseen persons who are vital to the enterprise and I say to them: “We see you and appreciate you.”

Early on, I suggested to the Chair we ask the other Campuses to share the cost for these Games and they readily agreed. We are very grateful. We could not have done it without this collaboration.

We began these Games with the symbolic lighting of the flame, and it is fitting that we close with that light. Now we pass the flame to the next campus to keep these Games alive and this spirit burning. May the light travel forward with unity, goodwill, purpose, and the consciousness of a university—and a Caribbean—still rising.

Thank you.

Rose-Marie Belle Antoine

Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine
Campus Principal



Members of Team Global Campus celebrating their success. PHOTO: KC MEDIA LTD

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CAMPUS NEWS

Vet Med students attend INTERNATIONAL POULTRY EXPO

BY TYRELL GITTENS



FROM LEFT: Sachia Reid-Thomas, Dr Shayne Ramsubeik, and Fariah Karim.

In its **Agricultural Outlook 2025-2034 report**, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) highlighted that global demand for meat, dairy, and fish will increase over the next decade. By 2034, the report projects a six percent increase in global per capita consumption of animal source foods.

Within this context, the poultry industry stands out as the fastest-growing livestock sector, with poultry meat remaining the most widely consumed animal protein globally.

For the Caribbean, this underscores the critical role of poultry production in supporting food security, affordability, and regional agricultural resilience.

To ensure that both students and the regional industry remain aligned with global advancements, Dr Shayne Ramsubeik, Lecturer in Avian and Poultry Medicine at UWI St Augustine's School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM), continues to use international platforms such as the International Production and Processing Expo (IPPE).

Held annually in Atlanta, USA, IPPE is the largest event of its kind, bringing together global leaders across the poultry, feed, and meat sectors.

'The poultry industry is evolving rapidly'

"The poultry industry is evolving rapidly, and if we want to keep the Caribbean industry sustainable and resilient, we must stay connected to these global developments," said Dr Ramsubeik.

The 2026 Expo (January 27–29) was all about innovation.

"What stood out at IPPE," Dr Ramsubeik recalled, "was the scale of innovation from automation and AI to improvements in housing and nutrition, all aimed at making production more efficient and sustainable."

Importantly, he emphasised the role of local adaptation, stating, "Our role at UWI is to take these technologies and evaluate them in our environment. What works in North America may need adjustment for Caribbean conditions, and that is where applied research becomes critical."

He added, "These opportunities are also about our students. Exposure to platforms like IPPE helps them understand where the industry is going, and prepares them to contribute meaningfully to the future of poultry production in the region."

Year 5 student Fariah Karim and Year 4 student Sachia Reid-Thomas, who also participated in the Latin America Poultry Summit and the International Poultry Scientific Forum, attended alongside Dr Ramsubeik.

Reid-Thomas said that attending the expo was an opportunity to expand her knowledge on the poultry industry and delve deeper into the production process. Speaking on her homeland, Reid-

Thomas said there is a growing demand for poultry in Barbados.

"I believe Barbados and other Caribbean countries can benefit heavily from the modern infrastructures on display at the expo, as well as the research into different aspects of nutrition and the many different ways that you can reduce costs while still improving quality in your meat and egg production," she said.

Karim enjoyed seeing all the new technology as well as the different perspectives of people from different countries who worked in poultry science and animal production. Her main takeaways were best practices to maintain poultry health, disease prevention, animal welfare, nutrition, and emerging technologies.

"The Caribbean can use many of the ideas that were presented at the expo," she said. "There is information and research that can be used to increase production and strengthen food security as well as have better biosecurity and management practices so that we could improve on our growing poultry production in the country."

MOU between the Caribbean Poultry Association and SVM

All three were able to attend the expo thanks to an MOU between the Caribbean Poultry Association (the representative body of the regional poultry industry and feed manufacturers) and the SVM that was signed in December 2024.

As a result of the MOU, sponsorship and funding to attend the 2026 expo were provided by the US Poultry and Egg Association via the Latin America Poultry Association and Caribbean Poultry Association.

Beyond attendance at the IPPE, the MOU delivers tangible outputs for the region. This includes the development of practical, farmer-focused resources targeting small and medium-scale poultry producers across the Caribbean. In 2025, the SVM produced a booklet on heat stress management—addressing one of the most significant challenges facing poultry farmers in tropical environments.

A second booklet titled *Safe and Sound: A Biosecurity Guide for Small Poultry Flocks in the Caribbean* was launched during a regional webinar in early 2026, which attracted approximately 300 farmers. The webinar also featured contributions from regional and international experts, including the Latin American Poultry Association, as well as Trinidad and Tobago's Chief Veterinary Officers.

Dr Ramsubeik said that these collaborations will continue to support the SVM's mission of advancing animal health, strengthening regional capacity, and promoting The UWI's One Health approach.

Tyrell Gittens is a conservationist, environmentalist and geographer.



A very comfortable canine blood donor with personnel from the School of Veterinary Medicine (from left) clinical teaching assistant Dr Vindya Sahatoo, and lecturers Dr Avin Arjoonsingh, Dr Ansarah Hosein, and Dr Sabrina Thomas. PHOTO: DARIUS PHILLIP

A Blood Bank for Man's Best Friend

BY DARIUS PHILLIP

Since its establishment in 2020, the UWI blood bank has been able to provide one blood transfusion per week to canine patients.

When we think about blood drives, we think about an emergency resource for people in need. But pets need blood too.

To meet that need, the School of Veterinary Medicine Blood Bank for Small Animals has set its sights on providing blood for all canines in the country.

"We would like to supply the vets of Trinidad with blood," said Dr Ansarah Hosein, Assistant Lecturer in Small Animal Medicine and founder of the blood bank at the School of Veterinary Medicine.

Since its establishment in 2020, the UWI blood bank has been able to provide one blood transfusion per week to canine patients. However, Dr Hosein said that the blood supply is not able to meet current demand.

Many canine patients that enter the blood bank suffered physical injury such as vehicular accident. A recent study conducted by Dr Hosein and The UWI showed that blood transfusions helped most dogs survive, buying time for treatment of their underlying illness.

"I think many people don't realise that dogs and animals get the same diseases that require the same sort of treatments that we need," said Dr Sabrina Thomas, Lecturer of Small Animal Medicine.

The School of Veterinary Medicine is seeking to increase blood donations through incentives such as free blood testing, vaccination and deworming for regular donors. They are expanding its reach through social media and collaborating with SEWA International TT for their 6K Fun Run on June 28 where people will be running alongside their dogs to promote the blood bank.

It should be noted though that apart from being healthy and vaccinated, when screening patients that they look for large breed dogs with good temperament to be donors.

Dr Hosein stated, "Sometimes one pint of blood can save two or three lives depending on the size of the patient."

For more information on the School of Veterinary Blood Bank and opportunities to donate blood, email: STA-FMS-SVMBloodBank@sta.uwi.edu

Darius Phillip is writer, photographer, and public relations professional.

■ CAMPUS NEWS

Former First Lady Mrs Zalayhar Hassanali

honoured at The UWIDEF's Ténor En Récital



FROM LEFT: Senator Darrell Allahaar, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister; Mrs Zalayhar Hassanali ORTT, Chairman of The UWIDEF; and Guillaume Pierre, Ambassador of the French Republic, at Ténor En Récital. PHOTOS: COURTESY THE UWI DEVELOPMENT AND ENDOWMENT FUND

The University of the West Indies Development and Endowment Fund (UWIDEF) officially launched its newest fundraising initiative on Saturday, June 6, 2026, with a sold-out evening of exceptional music, elegance, and philanthropy held under the patronage of Guillaume Pierre, Ambassador of the French Republic.

The inaugural event, “Ténor En Récital”, brought together patrons of the arts, members of the diplomatic corps, corporate leaders, educators, philanthropists, and supporters of higher education to raise funds for student bursaries and scholarships at The UWI St Augustine campus.

Exclusively sponsored by Jlew Signature Events Limited, the evening's centrepiece was a performance by acclaimed tenor Dr Edward Cumberbatch, accompanied by renowned pianist Dr Richard Tang Yuk. They delivered a programme featuring selections from lieder, oratorios, arias and spirituals.

Complementing the musical experience was a culinary offering curated by Chef John Aboud and the Aioli Restaurant team. Patrons also enjoyed a selection of premium wines courtesy of More Vino, alongside signature cocktails and mocktails featuring Blue Waters' Cran+ and VIVA from SM Jaleel & Company Limited.

Chairman of the UWIDEF, Professor of Practice Dr Sterling Frost ORTT paid tribute to former First Lady Mrs Zalayhar Hassanali ORTT, and conferred her with honorary membership to the foundation. The honour was bestowed in recognition of her longstanding commitment to education, philanthropy, and the advancement of UWIDEF's mission.

“Mrs Hassanali transformed what could have been a ceremonial role into a lifelong vocation of service,” Dr Frost said. “She reached out to the forgotten. She advocated for children and women. She championed persons with disabilities. And she brought dignity, comfort and hope to those who often stood beyond the spotlight of public attention. She demonstrated that leadership is not always exercised through authority. Sometimes it is exercised through compassion. Through generosity.”

The UWIDEF Vocal Recital Series continues on September 12, 2026 with soprano Natalia Dopwell. The series concludes on November 21 with soprano LeAndra Head. Proceeds from the series support student bursaries and scholarships at UWI St Augustine.



Dr Edward Cumberbatch

■ Persons interested in attending can contact the UWIDEF Secretariat at sta-uwide@uwi.edu or 730-6489.

Just off the main campus of UWI St Augustine, May 27 saw a celebration of the return of a space with a long history as a part of the university community.

The launch of the new Senior Common Room and Conference Centre marks a new chapter for the facility that integrates its two previous functions over the years: a designated social space for academic, senior administrative and professional (ASAP) staff, and as a conference and events space for both campus and external activities.

President of The West Indies Group of University Teachers (WIGUT), Dr Indira Rampersad, spoke at the celebration, saying that, “This is indeed a momentous occasion as, once again, we stand at the crossroads of history, celebrating a defining moment of our union's struggle.”

On campuses worldwide, senior common rooms (SCR) are spaces that foster collegial relationships among staff. They are used for networking, the exchange of ideas, and social connection. Dr Rampersad noted that the facility was originally donated by the Canadian Government to serve as an SCR, but was taken out of use as a staff social space in 2012 and converted for conference and business-related activity, a change that WIGUT has long campaigned to address.

“We never relented,” she said. “Today we are kick-starting that SCR, which was always a private members club, just bigger and better, bolder and more beautiful.”

The location now hosts conference rooms, social lounges, and a sports bar featuring a 98-inch screen sponsored by the union. The SCR is open to ASAP staff as well as professionals, entrepreneurs, alumni, and community leaders.

Dr Rampersad thanked Campus Principal Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, who was represented by Deputy Principal Professor Derek Chadee at the launch, for her role in bringing back the SCR.

“Principal,” she said, “we also wish to specially thank you, who supported our struggle as Dean of the Faculty of Law and as the Principal, who kept her promise and has returned the SCR to ASAP staff.”

SENIOR COMMON ROOM opens at UWI St Augustine



WIGUT President Dr Indira Rampersad and UWI St Augustine Deputy Principal Professor Derek Chadee cut the ribbon for the launch of the new Senior Common Room (SCR) while members of the WIGUT Executive and SCR Committee look on. At right is Mr Andrew Boodhoo, concessionaire for the SCR. PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

Battle for the Bails

WIGUT also staged Battle for the Bails: Cricket with a Cause II, a friendly T-15 windball match between union members and St Augustine Campus Management, on May 28 at the Administrative West Field. The match was the sequel to last year's May Day Cricket Mixmatch. Held as UWI Games 2026 continued, the event brought faculty, staff and administrators together in a display of camaraderie and friendly competition.

In closing her speech, Dr Rampersad focused on the work done towards staff advocacy by WIGUT over the years, with this new SCR as their latest success.

“Let us commit ourselves to honouring their legacy by continuing the work of building a robust and active union and SCR,” she said, “both of which reflect the best of what our beloved UWI, our university, once was and can be.”

■ OUR GRADUATES

UWI graduates are everywhere – politics, business, the arts, and as public intellectuals. In the coming months, **UWI TODAY** will profile some of our high achieving alumni who have made or are making a positive impact on society.

Celeste Mohammed is hard to pin down, and that's how she likes it.

For lovers of Caribbean literature, especially its current wave, she is highly-regarded as a novelist and short story writer. But before that, she was a corporate lawyer, one at the tippy top of her profession at a state company. Her writing delves into some of the grittiest caverns of the Trinbagonian experience, yet the author herself is a middle class woman. She forcefully says that she is not a feminist, but follows with “I have feminist concerns”.

And although these unusual variations are just who she is, Mohammed's unwillingness to fit into a single category is also a manifesto for her work and life.

“Labels make me itch,” she says. “They make me deeply uncomfortable. Life is a lot more flexible than many people allow it to be. I can be one thing and another, I can do one thing and another. A lot of what people call breaking expectations is just that. It's me having a wider view of what's possible.”

That ability to take a wider view is well-reflected in her writing, and the response of readers. In her relatively short career as a writer, she was first published in 2017, she has won the John D Gardner Memorial Prize for Fiction, the PEN/Robert J Dau Short Story Prize for Emerging Writers, the Virginia Woolf Award for Short Fiction, and the OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature. In March of this year, she won the Hope Prize, competing against more than 2,500 entrants from about 90 countries.

“My phone rang late in the night,” Mohammed describes the moment her victory was announced. “The woman on the other end had an Australian accent and she said ‘we're calling to let you know you've won. I had to sit down. I think I started to cry. The next morning, when I woke, I didn't even know if it was real.”

She sighs, “It's an honour. It was more than I had hoped for. I am very grateful.”

A Writerly Child

Although she made her transition from lawyer, having studied Law at The UWI, to writer, Mohammed always had the soul of an author.

“I was always a writerly child,” she recalls. “I would always be the weird child who needed to go off by herself. I always had that thoughtful, observing, trying-to-figure-things-out essence.”

Growing up in San Fernando, “just off Ciper Street” as she describes it, finding time to herself was an active pursuit. Though her immediate family was small, her mother, brother and herself, she was part of what she called a traditional Indo-Caribbean family: her grandmother and aunts, 15 people in two houses and a big yard.

She says, “Growing up in a big family, you are never alone. You always feel like you have support. People have your back.”

And though she is the only writer in the family, they were all storytellers in the Trini tradition. They all had “a sense of humor, a sense of playfulness”.

“Those are the things that characterise my family and form the foundation of my storytelling,” Mohammed says.

Growing up on Enid Blyton's *The Secret Seven*, *The Famous Five*, from a young age, she was a reader. At age seven, she wrote her own Blyton-style mystery, a group of young detectives with a special twist: they all liked Johnny Depp.

Unfortunately, the very practical considerations of family and career expectations required the writerly child to choose a “good” career.

“Lawyer, doctor, engineer,” she lists her choices.

She chose Law. In those days, The UWI's Faculty of Law was on the Cave Hill Campus in Barbados. Students from Trinidad and Tobago did their first year at St Augustine, the second and third at Cave Hill and then returned to T&T to complete their legal education at the Hugh Wooding Law School.

“The first year here was fun,” she recalls. “I wasn't too far from home. I had friends on campus.”

Cave Hill was much more challenging because of the distance and the different culture, especially as a young person who came from a close-knit family.

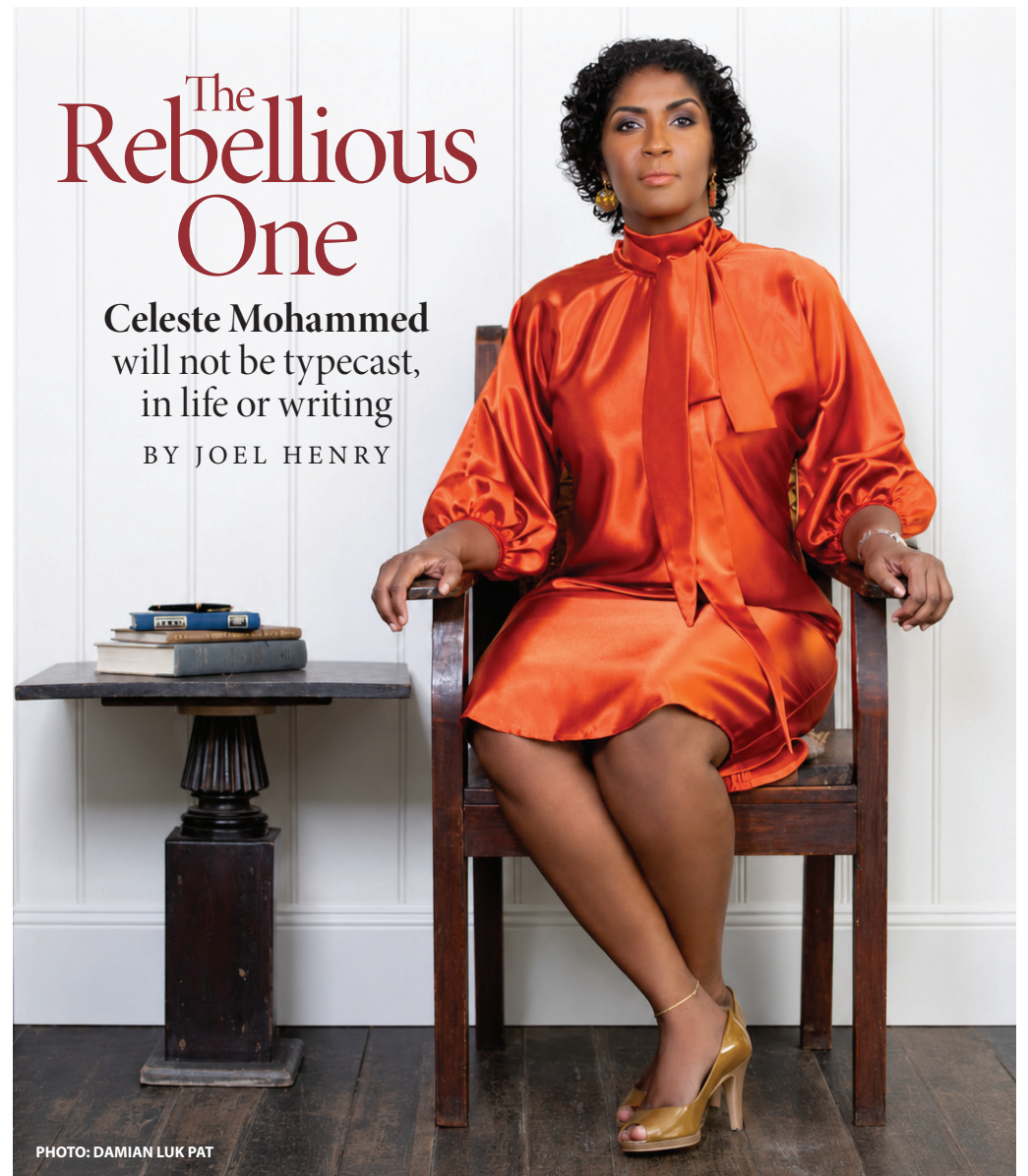
Nevertheless, she says the university “took me from being a little girl from South into being a woman with an understanding of the Caribbean”.

That's clear in how she talks about writing and literature in general. She speaks profusely about the “geographic Caribbean”, both with pride in its literary output and the desire to contribute to its development. Contribution, to her, includes the example she sets as a writer from the region who has made it spectacularly in a short space of time, but also as a teacher.

Stop doing something

By 2011, Mohammed had a very successful career.

“I was probably the third most important person in the company,” she says. “I was well-liked by the board.”



Yet she had the feeling many artists with unrequited creativity had, a desire to express herself in her art form.

She recalls: “I remember praying about the discontent I felt at my job, and I distinctly remember being at the kitchen sink washing dishes one day, wrestling with this whole thing. And I heard a voice in my head say, ‘I am not asking you to do anything. I am asking you to stop doing something.’”

So, she took a sabbatical. This was the first of many steps, some painful, that would eventually lead her to do an MFA in Creative Writing at Lesley University in Massachusetts. Then came the quickening. She attended in 2014, graduated in 2016, and by 2017 her first story was accepted for publication by the well-regarded journal, *New England Review*. The collection of stories she completed while doing the MFA would eventually be compiled as *Pleasantview*, her first published book. It would win several awards, including the OCM Bocas Prize.

Mohammed published a non-fiction book in 2023 based on interviews with Caribbean women in the energy sector titled *A Different Energy: Women in Caribbean Oil & Gas*. In 2025, she published what she describes as “a more personal work” drawn from “family stories and experiences”, *Ever Since We Small*.

So far, for 2026, her story “Plenty Time” has won the Hope Prize and was also short-listed for the Commonwealth Short Story Prize. It's an astounding record of success that she attributes to her work ethic.

“I don't know how to do anything halfway,” she says. “Everything I do, I put myself into it 150 percent.”

Then, she adds, “Sometimes it's a good thing, and sometimes it's a bad thing,” embracing binaries, even in examining her success.

Currently, Mohammed is working on her fourth book, another novel. She is also working on a non-fiction ghost writing project. Perhaps most delightfully of all, the writerly-child-now-woman, is teaching a creative writing course to ten students from across the Caribbean.

“There is a lot of talent in the Caribbean, but there is not a lot of high quality training,” she says. “I came up with the programme, pitched it to Bocas [Lit Fest], and negotiated with my publishers in the UK, Jacaranda Books, who are funding it. We meet twice a week. It is quite rigorous. I call it a short story intensive.”

The storyteller who found her way back has put together her own Blyton-esque gang of adventurers: *The Intensive Ten*.

■ CAMPUS NEWS

Socrates Returns

to the St Augustine Campus

A Dialogue with Socrates

After almost 15 years, the Department of History at the Faculty of Humanities and Education has reintroduced Philosophy. Socrates, The Father of Western Philosophy, was overheard dialoguing with students sitting with their laptops in front of the Alma Jordan Library:

- Socrates:** *Tell me, young scholars, why do you come to this place of learning?*
Students: To get a degree, of course, so that I can find good job.
Socrates: *Ah, so the purpose of education is employment? Then tell me, does a job guarantee wisdom?*
Students: Not really, but it helps us make money which we need to live.
Socrates: *Indeed, money helps us live. But does it teach us how to live well?*
Students: We learn that from experience, not from classes.
Socrates: *Then what is the role of your professors? Do they give you knowledge or merely information?*
Students: Information, mostly. We memorise facts, pass exams, and move on.
Socrates: *So, you possess facts, but do you examine them? For what use is knowledge if it does not lead to wisdom?*
Students: But wisdom is hard to measure. Employers don't ask for wisdom. They ask for technical skills.
Socrates: *And yet, without wisdom, skills may be used for harm.*
Students: Yes, but it can change the world.
Socrates: *Then should it not be guided by wisdom, lest it change the world for the worse?*
Students: So, you're saying that universities should teach us how to live, not just how to work?
Socrates: *Precisely. For the unexamined life, even with a degree, is not worth living.*

Why Study Philosophy?

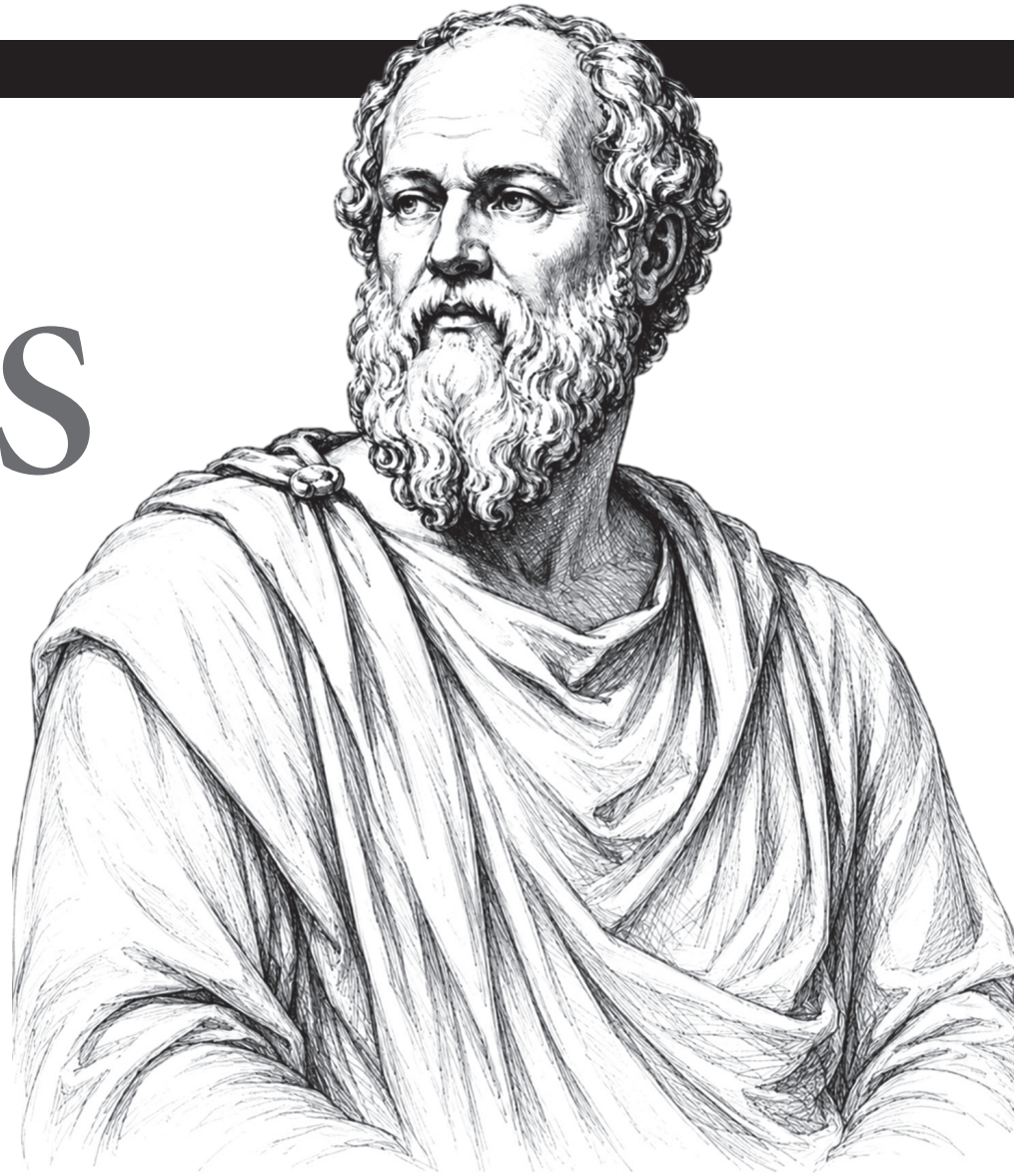
Research shows that graduates of philosophy programmes bring unique strengths of transferable soft skills (critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, leadership) that make them highly employable and effective in diverse workplaces. They can analyse complex problems and adapt to new challenges more readily with strategic foresight and ethical clarity.

Philosophy, along with technical competencies, represent complementary strengths, which is why diverse teams often outperform homogeneous ones. Specifically, philosophy graduates are trained to evaluate arguments, spot assumptions, and reason and communicate clearly, possessing strong writing and speaking abilities. Philosophy doesn't train you for one job—it trains you to think for every job.

Philosophy is not about abstract speculation for Central Bank leaders. It's about better judgement, ethical clarity, and strategic foresight. It equips managers to handle complexity, communicate with precision, and maintain public trust in an institution whose legitimacy depends on confidence.

Students currently enrolled the Introduction to Philosophy class speak of the ways they've benefited so far.

"Every class explained new ways of thinking and understanding exactly why we do things the way we do. Every question was met with a multitude of answers that invited more questions thus allowing us to come together to get solutions. It was a great and engaging experience," said Carissa Williams, a student of Physics.



Professor Surendra Arjoon is Professor of Business and Professional Ethics at the at UWI St Augustine's Department of Management Studies.

Alicia John's thoughts were similar. "My experience in the Philosophy course has been really eye-opening and thought-provoking. It encouraged me to question my beliefs, think more deeply about life and reality, and consider different perspectives. I found it challenging at times, but overall, it was a rewarding experience that helped me grow intellectually," said the International Tourism Management student.

"The class was very informative," Eliseo Villaroel from Modern Language & Linguistics stated. "It provided insight on new concepts which can be useful for reflection daily."

Of all of the lessons to be learned, course lecturer Professor Surendra Arjoon underscored one: that beyond knowledge, wisdom must be the true goal of education to promote the well-lived life. He expressed concerns with the lecture-heavy, exam-driven education that may discourage rational inquiry.

"The etymology of the word philosophy is philo (love) and sophia (wisdom)," he said. "Philosophy means the love of wisdom. It opens your heart and mind, and addresses the critical challenge in our society: those with small hearts and minds. Aristotle provides the antidote toward acquiring the key virtue of magnanimity, which means great souls with big hearts and big minds. An examined life is worth living!"

For the next academic year, Introduction to Philosophy and Applied Ethics are on offer.

(The Socratic dialogues owe a debt to Microsoft Co-Pilot)

UWI GAMES 2026

TROPHIES AND FAMILY

BY VANEISA BAKSH

The championship winning team from The UWI Mona Campus at The UWI GAMES closing ceremony held on Friday, May 29 at the Sport and Physical Education Centre, St Augustine Campus. PHOTOS: KC MEDIA LTD



Now that the dust has settled and the Mona Campus has bounded off with the champions' trophy that it fought hard to retain, The UWI Games can rest on its laurels until the next edition in two years, satisfied in the knowledge that there was much to celebrate in the 2026 edition. After the hiatus because of COVID, its resumption this year proved that the concepts underpinning it since its inception more than sixty years ago are still alive and relevant.

Founded more than 60 years ago

In the mid-sixties, when it was called the Inter-Campus Games, three campuses existed: Mona, St Augustine and the newly established Cave Hill. This year, Global Campus and Five Islands are part of The UWI family, and their presence lent an extra edge to the competitions.

When the games were first envisaged, the idea was to provide an event that would do far more than engage competitive rivalry. It was seen as a way to build regional bonds, and deepen understanding of the different cultural environments from which students and staff originated.

Much of what is taken for granted in these technologically advanced times simply did not exist then. Social media, ubiquitous purveyors of instant friends, have redefined relationships and created lifestyle experiences that could not have been foreseen all those decades ago.

Yet, despite the often contradictory consequences of technology, the fundamentals of human behaviour continue to be relatively unchanged.

The UWI had looked to the Olympic Games, which had been resurrected 130 years ago, as a model to guide its philosophical core. It was one of the reasons why a symbolic torch was passed through the campuses before lending its flame to light up the proceedings in May.

The goals of the Olympic Games surpass the simple celebration of athletic prowess. According to its mission statement, the Olympics are meant to



encourage and support the promotion of ethics and good governance in sport; to support the education of youth through sport; to ensure that the spirit of fair play prevails and violence is avoided; and to encourage and support the organisation, development, and co-ordination of sport and sports competitions, among other things. These are the ideals that are aligned to the spirit of The UWI Games.

To be an Olympian is one of the finest accomplishments any person can achieve. In the Caribbean, more than 4,000 athletes have won medals over time. In the context of size alone, it is a phenomenal achievement. A short list of just 10 of them testifies to the presence of excellence: Usain Bolt, Merlene Ottey, Shelly-Ann Fraser Pryce, Elaine Thompson-Herah, Kirani James, Julien Alfred, Anthony Nesty, Hasely Crawford, Ato Boldon, and Keshorn Walcott.

Pride and belonging

An undeniable sense of pride and a feeling of belonging fill the Caribbean spirit under the glow of these athletes' beacons. This is what the UWI Games aspired to in its infancy.

As a regional university, the idea had always been to build a collective identity that supports the development of a strong community. Through different pathways, some intentional, some by happenstance, that quest has been fruitful.

In the early days, when the campuses did not offer a full range of faculties, it was the norm for students

to have to travel and live at the campuses where their degree programmes were offered. It was one of the most powerful enablers of Caribbean integration, because it allowed students to interact with their West Indian neighbours with the kind of intimacy that comes with day-to-day life. If all other efforts failed to bring about that kind of federation, this really worked.

When you listen to alumni reflect on those days and how it altered their perspectives about what it means to be a West Indian, and how it shaped their world vision, you know how profound that has been to developing a Caribbean civilisation and identity. This is one area where the notions of individualism and national sovereignty give way to the shared feeling of belonging to a region that is a magnificent place to call home.

The UWI Games have grown in a manner that demonstrates that the quest for excellence burns just as brightly outside of the academic halls. The 2026 edition included more than 575 student athletes from the five campuses in 10 sporting disciplines. They were supported by more than 300 souls volunteering their time and energy to ensure the smooth passage of the events over the seven venues.

Apart from those who enlisted themselves in official and unofficial capacities, there were many others who attended to support their campus teams, regardless of where they called home.

Israel Latran is a Trinidadian student studying Law at the Cave Hill campus. He was hanging out with Tyesha Peniston and Zenol Gaynos, both from St Vincent, watching the football match between Cave Hill and Five Islands. The three of them were



vocally supporting Cave Hill, who won. Tyesha told me that adapting to Barbados was interesting, because Barbados had “more than home, but was less homey”.

Jake Taylor, the incoming Guild President for Five Islands in Antigua, was perhaps the loudest, most garrulous supporter of his team. He’s doing an MBA, and with his hyper energy and thirst to try out new things, he wanted a list of Trinidadian foods so he could make sure to sample them before he left, he is certain to make a name for himself.

Upsets and new experiences

Alahna Hazelwood, a nursing student from Antigua, was demure. She and Jahzara Donovan both play volleyball, and they were both surprised that they had beaten the St Augustine team. They’d never been to Trinidad before, but they seemed a little timid to explore or to try the cuisine. I asked students what Trini dishes they had tried or planned to try. Inevitably, doubles, chicken roti, and bake and shark came up. Pelau was considered, but as most people said their own cuisine involved some sort of rice “cook-up” they didn’t feel particularly curious about the T&T version.

Interestingly, many of the students had never been to Trinidad, and most had never left their homelands, except for going to external campuses. It is one of the perks of being part of the UWI Games.

Devonte Shaw, a third-year student doing Economics and Accounting at Mona, was getting an earful from Alicia Richards as they watched Mona trounce Five Islands at netball. You couldn’t say it was a heated exchange, because Devonte didn’t stand a chance against the quick-witted Alicia, who turned



Maikea Bramble, captain of The UWI St Augustine netball team, gives the Athlete's Oath at the opening ceremony of UWI Games 2026 on Friday, May 22.

UWI GAMES 2026

out to be the Assistant Manager of the Mona team. The conversation was about gender disparities and inequities. Alicia used to play football and rugby, and in fact, the first time she came to Trinidad was as an athlete for the Games in 2015.

She had a lot to say about the changes she's seen and changes she'd like to see ahead, but she was convinced that the games provide a grand opportunity for students to learn more about themselves as athletes and West Indians.

Understanding a little more about the processes that the athletes go through to prepare for the games, it was clear that there were no shortcuts. It was about long bouts of training, and rigorous calibration of minds and bodies with discipline and commitment.

Ten different categories were on display, each requiring a specific skill set. Apart from the general attention to physical fitness, there had to be special focus on those demands from each category. Fit athletes meet the first tier of the challenge, but it goes much further. There is a large body of research and analysis that goes into the benefits of sport for human development. The way it enriches the mind and influences thought processes is one of the many reasons the university continues to support and encourage the event.

Sport teaches team building. That is not as simple as it seems because it means learning to live harmoniously with teammates of often wildly different personalities and outlooks.

Of the 10 sporting competitions, six were team sports: cricket, football, basketball, hockey, volleyball, and netball. The other four, lawn and table tennis, swimming, and the highly anticipated track and field events, still demanded that participants work with each other as they prepared.

Mona takes the crown but everyone wins

In the end, with Mona taking the win with 136 points, and St Augustine tallying 114, Cave Hill 108, Five Islands 44, and Global Campus mustering 22, the champion of the event was the spirit that shone at every turn.

At the closing ceremony, St Augustine Campus Principal Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine was clear that this was what mattered most as she congratulated the athletes.

"You have pushed yourselves beyond what you might have imagined before, and now you know that you can break the barriers that can sometimes hold you back. This is how you unlock your true potential, and this is not confined to sport. It applies to everything in your life, what you will encounter in this volatile world we inhabit.

"As you accomplished, you lifted our spirits to the realm where we believed in ourselves and our capacity to achieve extraordinary things.

"Life will always throw you the unexpected, it takes courage and confidence to manoeuvre your way past it. More than the medals and the scores, we celebrate the spirit in which you competed.

"Indeed, sport has always been one of the ways we have confronted the self-doubt and negativity that colonialism has burdened us with. We hear often that sport develops the individual," she said, citing characteristics of courage, fairness, reliability and decency as the ones found on the field of sport.

She reminded the audience that it is in the games where we cannot afford to play games.

"Play sport, but don't play games."

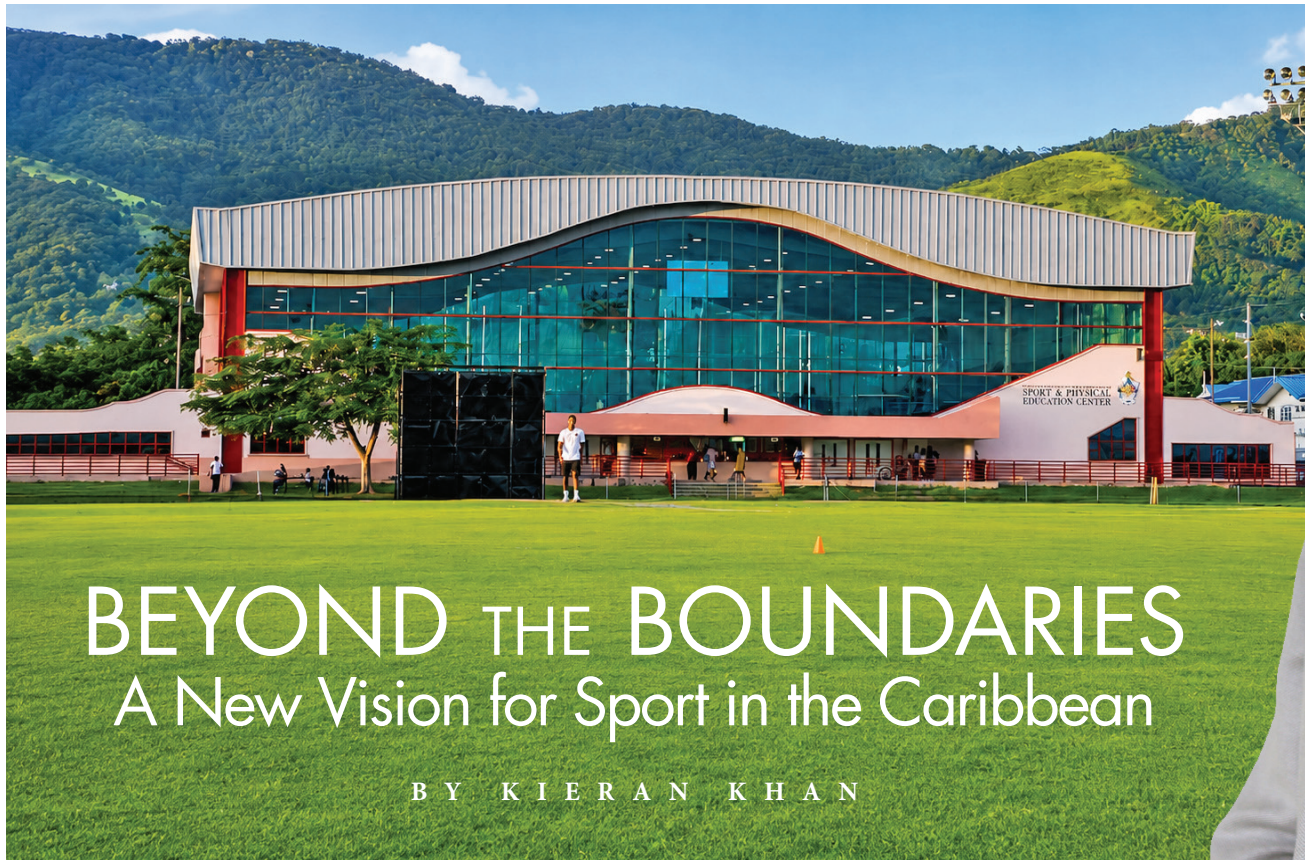
Vaneisa Baksh is an editor and writer. Her latest book is "Son of Grace", a biography of cricketer Sir Frank Worrell.



An undeniable sense of pride and a feeling of belonging fill the Caribbean spirit under the glow of these athletes' beacons. This is what the UWI Games aspired to in its infancy.



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BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES

A New Vision for Sport in the Caribbean

BY KIERAN KHAN

Dr Roy
McCree
Dean of
The UWI
Faculty of
Sport

For generations, sport has helped satisfy some of the Caribbean's deepest desires: pride, prestige, pleasure, passion, patriotism and power. Cricket grounds, sprint tracks and playing fields have become places where national dreams are tested, celebrated and remembered, helping to shape school rivalries, community loyalties, and national mythology.

Dr Roy McCree believes that, for all our passion, the region has been thinking far too narrowly about sport for far too long. The newly appointed Dean of The University of the West Indies' Faculty of Sport is challenging the region to view sport not simply as a cultural touchstone, but as a serious academic discipline, developmental tool and economic sector.

"In this rampant pre-dinosaur mindset, sport is still seen primarily as a source of identity formation to promote nationalism and regionalism," he said.

It is a deliberately provocative assessment, but one grounded in a larger argument: that while the Caribbean remains deeply invested in sport, it has yet to fully embrace the systems and industries that now define it globally. As only the second dean since the Faculty's establishment in 2017, McCree steps into the role at a pivotal moment, not just for the Faculty, but for the wider conversation around sport in the Caribbean.

For the past 36 years, he has researched and published on community sport, sport media, gender and sport, athletic migration, nationalism, governance and sport policy, while also teaching undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the sociology of sport and sport policy. That long view informs how he sees the region's opportunities and its blind spots.

"I must take this opportunity to thank the outgoing dean, Dr Akshai Mansingh, for taking on the challenging or daunting task of being dean of the first ever Faculty of Sport in the Caribbean, and laying a foundation on which I plan to build as it relates particularly to teaching and research about sport development, as well as sport for development."

McCree is clear that his appointment is not about changing course so much as expanding ambition.

"I plan to build on this foundation as well as undertake new initiatives to advance the sport developmental agenda in the region through the delivery of programmes in the field of sport studies, empirical research and outreach."



Globally, sport is no longer confined to athletes, competition and spectatorship. It is a sprawling ecosystem that includes broadcasting, tourism, medicine, psychology, event management, research, fitness, endorsements, manufacturing and policy.

A Faculty Built Differently

One of the youngest faculties in The UWI system, the Faculty of Sport remains relatively new by institutional standards, and for some readers, perhaps still not fully understood. Unlike traditional faculties anchored to a single campus, this one was built regionally.

"In relation to its structure, it is important to note that the Faculty of Sport is cross-campus in nature, for it consists of five Academies of Sport spread across the UWI. The Faculty of Sport therefore, is not like the traditional landed faculties which are located on one particular island."

The academies span Cave Hill, Five Islands, Global Campus, Mona, and St Augustine.

Beyond athlete development, the faculty is concerned with research, teaching, human capital formation and outreach, placing sport within the wider mission of the university. That model did not emerge in a vacuum.

"As conceived by the VC, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, the Faculty of Sport has the twin objectives of bringing these programmes under one umbrella, and encouraging a more professional, systematic and scientific approach to the organisation and development of sport in the Caribbean."

The Business of Sport

Globally, sport is no longer confined to athletes, competition and spectatorship. It is a sprawling ecosystem that includes broadcasting, tourism, medicine, psychology, event management, research, fitness, endorsements, manufacturing and policy.

McCree believes the Caribbean has yet to fully grasp the scale of that transformation.

"We have seen a sea change in the commercialisation of sport with the emergence of a global sport industry."

He noted that estimates cited by the World Economic Forum place the value of the global sport industry at approximately US\$2.3 trillion in 2025, with projections suggesting it could grow to US\$3.7 trillion by 2030.

Yet in the region, economic thinking has remained comparatively narrow.

"In the context of the Caribbean, however, this notion of a sports industry is very underdeveloped as our economic development is still trapped in traditional conceptions of economy or industry driven by oil, gas, tourism and, to a lesser extent, agriculture. The Faculty can play a role in developing a sport manufacturing sector through training sport engineers, sport product designers and sport entrepreneurs, but this would require iconoclastic change among an entire miseducated generation of policy makers, educators, businessmen, and investors whose notions or conceptions of economy, economic development, athlete and sport are still trapped in 19th century ideas or a PE and coal pot state of mind."

He sees particular opportunities in sport management, coaching, psychology, policy and medicine.

"As noted earlier, sport tourism together with the sport service sector, particularly sport management, sport medicine, sport coaching, sport psychology, sport policy, offer the greatest opportunities for development in the local and Caribbean sport industry. However, the creation and sustainability of these opportunities would require substantive support from both the state and private sector as well as the sport community."

His wider point is clear: if the Caribbean wants to benefit from sport economically, it must begin building systems around sport, not simply celebrating outcomes on the field.

Rethinking Expertise

One of McCree's strongest critiques concerns how sporting expertise is understood in the region. In many Caribbean contexts, lived experience as an athlete is often treated as the principal qualification for



'We can no longer rely solely on participation in sport as the criteria to qualify as an expert on sport and to assume particular leadership roles in its organisation and development.'

leadership or decision-making.

Dr McCree believes that model has limits.

"We can no longer rely solely on participation in sport as the criteria to qualify as an expert on sport and to assume particular leadership roles in its organisation and development."

He frames that thinking through a familiar regional refrain.

"This century's old, archaic mindset can be summed up in the popular expression or question: What you know 'bout sport? You ever play sport?"

Modern sport, he argues, now is greater for its intersects with myriad other disciplines. Passion and lived experience still matter, but they cannot be the only tools on the table.

"While experiential knowledge derived from participating in sport cannot be discounted or dismissed, we need to understand that we can no

longer approach sport in the 21st century based on 18th, 19th and even 20th century ideas surrounding its role in society and development."

It is, fundamentally, a call for professionalisation.

Sport Beyond the Scoreboard

Even as he advocates for systems and structure, Dr McCree is clear-eyed about sport's enduring social power. Historically, he says, sport has helped shape individual and collective identity throughout the region.

"Sport has had its greatest impact on Caribbean society in the area of identity formation at both an individual and collective level which include character formation, school identity, community identity, regional identity and national identity."

It has also created mobility.

"Sport has also enabled many persons to pursue university education abroad through the award of scholarships that has facilitated both their personal and professional development."

Dr McCree also points to sport's wider developmental potential, particularly in areas linked to health, youth engagement, inclusion and community-building.

"While successive governments have tried to use sport to achieve certain social policy or development objectives, this has been undermined by a lack of co-ordination, planning, and the use of persons not appropriately trained in the field of sport studies."

The message is consistent: good intentions are not enough. Sport must be approached with the same seriousness as any other developmental sector.

Reunited, Reignited, Ready

That philosophy found a visible expression when The UWI hosted the return of the UWI Games at the St Augustine Campus. The Games aren't simply a sporting fixture; for Dr McCree, they represent something much larger.

"When the Games were first introduced, they aimed to underline the regional character of the UWI as part of the process of Caribbean integration as well as to encourage student participation in sport."

First introduced in 1965, the UWI Games emerged during a defining period of Caribbean nation-building and regional identity formation. While this year's edition was originally scheduled for St Augustine in 2021, the event was postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Games were finally staged to great success in May 2026 under the theme Reunited, Reignited, Ready.

Hosting the event required significant co-ordination.

"Around 14 sub-committees had to be established covering sponsorship, accommodation, food, logistics, uniforms, scheduling, and logistics, to name a few."

For Dr McCree, the Games are a practical expression of the Faculty's wider regional mission.

Looking Ahead

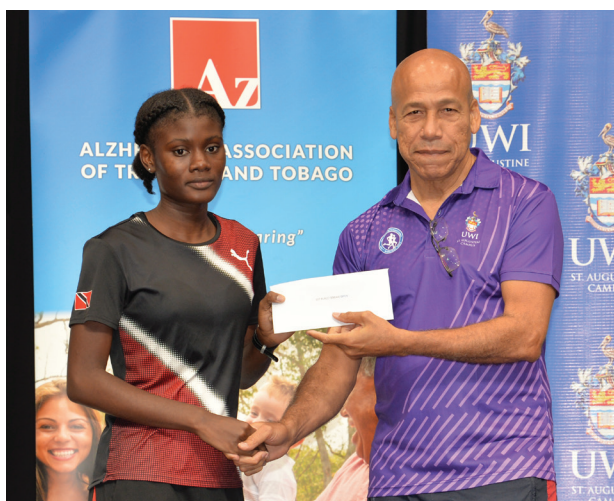
When asked what impact he hopes to leave as Dean, Dr McCree points to programme expansion, stronger outreach, greater research output, deeper scholarship and broader recognition for sport studies across the Caribbean. But beneath those ambitions sits a larger challenge.

The Caribbean already knows how to celebrate sport.

What Dr McCree is asking is whether the region is finally ready to think about sport differently, as an ecosystem, an industry, a discipline and a developmental force worthy of serious investment.

The Caribbean has never lacked passion for sport. The question now is whether it is prepared to build something meaningful and widely beneficial with the same intensity.

Kieran Andrew Khan is a freelance writer and digital marketing consultant.



Dr McCree gives the first place prize to Ms Aniqah Bailey, women's winner of the 2025 UWI SPEC International Half Marathon.

UWI GAMES 2026

FINAL WHISTLE, LASTING UNITY. GREETINGS UWI FAMILY



Let us carry forward the energy, unity, and pride of these games in our work, our studies, and our enduring service to the region.

The final whistle on UWI Games 2026 signals more than the end of competition. It marks the triumph of a spirit that unites us as One UWI.

After a long-awaited return, the games brought us together as one Caribbean family: reunited in purpose, reignited in spirit, and ready to celebrate the very best of who we are. These games remain at the very heartbeat of the UWI student experience, shaping identity, pride, and lifelong connection.

Across eight remarkable days, our athletes embodied excellence, resilience, and pride, reminding us that sport is a powerful expression of community and belonging. This year, we were especially heartened by the participation of our youngest campus, Five Islands, whose presence signals the continued growth and vibrancy of our university. Equally commendable was the determined showing of the UWI Global Campus, a uniquely complex, multi-site enterprise, whose students came together across distances to compete, represent, and give their very best.

We also celebrate the strong spirit of inclusion reflected throughout the games, where women and men competed, led, officiated, and organised with equal distinction. This display of gender equity strengthens not only our sporting culture but also reflects the broader values we uphold as a regional institution.

I extend congratulations to the Mona Campus on securing the Championship title yet again, and to all campuses whose performances reflected the highest standards of sportsmanship and passion. Each of you has strengthened the bonds that define us as one university.

My sincere thanks to the St Augustine Campus for its outstanding hosting, and to the many organisers, volunteers, partners, and supporters whose dedication made these games such a resounding success.

This year's games also carry special significance as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Faculty

of Sport. Over the past decade, the faculty has played a transformative role in advancing sport as a cornerstone of UWI's academic and developmental mission, shaping elite performance, research, and innovation, while elevating the standard and impact of initiatives such as The UWI Games.

As we pass the baton to the Cave Hill Campus for UWI Games 2028, we do so united, grounded in a shared purpose, and inspired by collective achievement. At the same time, we reaffirm our commitment to sport as a vital pillar of UWI's multidimensional education, developing well-rounded student-athletes, expanding pathways for professional growth, and preparing our students for life beyond the university.

Let us carry forward the energy, unity, and pride of these games in our work, our studies, and our enduring service to the region.

Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice-Chancellor



'Born in the 1960s as a student-led initiative, The UWI Games have grown into one of the most cherished expressions of our regional identity, bringing generations of students together in competition, friendship, laughter, and spirited campus rivalry grounded in a shared loyalty to The University of the West Indies and the Caribbean region.'

**UWI St Augustine Deputy
Principal Professor Derek Chadee,
Chair of The UWI Games 2026
Organising Committee**

'These games are not just about producing athletes, they are producing leaders. They are producing disciplined young professionals; Caribbean citizens who understand collaboration, diversity, and excellence. There is something powerful about seeing students from five campuses across the Caribbean come together under one banner. In a world where division often dominates headlines, events like these remind us that we are stronger together; different islands, different accents, different cultures, but one Caribbean people.'

**Olympian and World Champion
Jehue Gordon**



UWI GAMES 2026

During most of the academic year, The UWI follows a familiar rhythm.

Students hurry between lectures. Study groups gather beneath trees. Conversations revolve around assignments, exams, and deadlines.

But, for just over one week in May 2026, that rhythm changed completely. The return of The UWI Games transformed the campus into something that felt closer to an athletes' village than a university.

Residence halls filled with competitors from across the Caribbean. Sporting venues buzzed from morning until evening. Students who had never met before found themselves supporting one another, sharing meals, and building friendships that stretched beyond campus boundaries.

Track and Field captain and para-athlete Johan Biput watched the transformation unfold throughout the games.

"Seeing the athletes and campus transform from what they were during the semester and year into a vibrant village of athletes similar to the Olympics is just an absolute privilege and honour," he said. For him, seeing student-athletes experiencing the games for the first time became one of the event's most rewarding aspects.

Biput's comparison resonated with many participants, including second-year students Sion Hackett and Ajani Rechais. Hackett, 23, leaned on learnings from his Leadership and Management degree to captain the St Augustine cricket team to a third-place finish, while Rechais, a Sports Kinetics major, was part of the St Augustine team that edged out the Mona Campus to the basketball crown.

Rechais, who can play either the shooting guard or small forward positions, was ruled out of the Games because of medical reasons. However, his competitive fire remained.

"Having that name across my chest isn't for the weak, and the magnitude of the event is surreal," Rechais said, before the games began.

Coach Kern George said Rechais' absence from the court was a big loss for the team, but the energy and presence the youngster brought to the bench showed what the games are all about.

HOSTS AND RIVALS THE STUDENT-ATHLETES OF UWI ST AUGUSTINE

BY CHERISSE LAUREN BERKELEY AND RONEIL WALCOTT



Members of UWI St Augustine's championship-winning men's basketball team with Coach Kern George (front row, left). PHOTOS: KC MEDIA LTD





Emeritus Professor Prakash Persad, Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training (front row, left); shares a photo with UWI St Augustine's men's football team as they celebrate their gold-medal victory.

While Rechais had to take a back seat this time around, Hackett was front and centre as he led the cricket team into action at the Sir Frank Worrell Memorial Ground. Hackett's journey started in his infant days while watching cricket matches with his grandfather. He quickly developed a love and passion for the sport which propelled him to the maroon colours of the West Indies Under-19 team, and later earned him a First-Class debut with the Combined Campuses and Colleges team at age 20.

He said the 2026 games gave him the chance "to inspire others and contribute positively to the UWI community".

Whether the sport of choice was basketball, cricket, football or hockey, The UWI was a hotbed of activity. The blend of regional colours spread through the campus as student-athletes from the varying islands moved between venues, accommodations, and dining facilities.

With racket in hand, tennis player Jamila Welsh was one of those athletes who moved busily through the halls, trying her utmost to get those extra serves in. Born in St Kitts, Welsh has adapted to life seamlessly in St Augustine, with her leadership skills and calming presence being seen as an asset both on and off the court. Even in her final year, the Electronics major juggles her studies, tennis training, and student-leadership, while also trying to maintain a social life.

She will be saying goodbye to the halls of The UWI soon, but at the other end of the spectrum, first-year student Caitlyn Look Fong is just getting her feet wet at the institution. Hailing from Gasparillo, the Doctor of Dentistry student was quite happy for her first taste of the games.

For Look Fong, who has already represented T&T in regional swim meets, the build-up to the games was just as rewarding as the main course.

"My most memorable moment so far has been transitioning into university-level training and being part of the team environment," she said, on the eve of competing. "Being able to train with more athletes, push my limits, and adjust to a higher standard has been a big and meaningful experience for me."

She began swimming at age five after her parents enrolled her in lessons to learn how to swim safely. By age nine, she was swimming competitively. And a few weeks ago, she and her St Augustine teammates joined with former Olympian Cherelle Thompson to deliver gold for the campus.

Similar to Look Fong, many students currently enrolled at The UWI never attended a UWI Games before. The tournament had not been held since 2019, meaning an entire generation entered university without experiencing one of the institution's most celebrated traditions.

The return of the games offered more than competition. It offered connection.

Students from different territories exchanged stories about their campuses, cultures, and lives. Athletes formed friendships with competitors that they would spend the week battling on courts and fields. Supporters adopted teams and players they had never heard of only days before.

Even for Biput, whose experience differed from many competitors, the games created opportunities he had not expected.

As a para-athlete, there were no direct competitors in his category. Instead, he participated in an

invitational event alongside his peers.

"I was surprised and thankful to race against them," he said.

His focus remained firmly on supporting teammates and celebrating the progress of sport at the St Augustine Campus.

"There was a lot of emotion and pride for the track and field team."

Biput credited two-time Olympian Coach Jehue Gordon and the athletes for their continued growth and dedication. "We have high hopes for the future of sport, particularly track and field at St Augustine."

Though Biput has big dreams for what lies ahead, this time, the Mona Campus sped away with the track and field honours. Not only did the team take track and field gold, they also defended their overall title.

The games, however, offered so much more than bragging rights. As the festivities drew to a close with the fanfare of the awards ceremony, the campus gradually returned to its normal routine.

The visiting athletes departed. The venues grew quieter. Students turned their attention back to coursework and examinations.

Yet, for those who experienced the week firsthand, something remained.

The memory of a campus transformed. The memory of loud stands, new friendships, and shared celebrations. And the reminder that university life can be about much more than what happens inside a classroom.

Until the Cave Hill 2028 Games then. Make sure to be reunited, reignited and ready.

UWI GAMES 2026

CAVE HILL LADY BLACKBIRDS SOAR

BY JOEL HENRY

If you were at the National Hockey Centre in Tacarigua or SPEC's Indoor Court right here on campus you might have been privileged to see some of the most dominant and professional performances in the entirety of UWI Games. They came from Cave Hill campus's women's netball, hockey, and volleyball teams.

"I am proud of the athletes," says Dr Rudolph Alleyne, Head of Cave Hill's Academy of Sport, and the campus delegation. "They performed very well, especially our female athletes."

The women's teams took the champion's trophies in all three sports, as well as multiple special awards.

"I was pleased with my performance," says a very subdued Shonica Wharton, goal shooter for the netball team.

While she might sound laid back, Shonica was beyond outstanding for her team. Once she received the ball under the opponent's net, she scored almost every shot.

"As an athlete," she says, "I always try to give my best in every game and always look for areas where I can improve for the next game."

That outlook, combined with her accuracy and court awareness, have served her well. She's represented Barbados at the international level in netball for years, competing at both the Netball World Cup and Commonwealth Games.

Having recently completed her Social Sciences degree with minors in Management, Psychology, and Sociology, Shonica says she wants to "continue competing and representing Barbados at the highest level possible. At the same time, I am focused on continuing my professional career."

Her teammate, Sierra Rayside age 20, is also balancing sports and studies, entering her third year in Sports Science at Cave Hill. And though she was also a member of the championship netball team, her true sport is volleyball. As the Blackbirds' middle blocker, she was like a wall, intercepting balls and even furiously spiking the ball when the opposing team dropped their guard.

"I was very satisfied with my performance," she says. "I worked really hard to get to where I am today, so it's lovely to finally see that hard work paying off."

It did indeed pay off. Apart from winning the championship as part of the team, she also won the award for Best Middle Blocker. Outside of The UWI, she has represented Barbados in both court and beach volleyball in the Under 19 and Under 21 categories, and plays Division 1 club volleyball.

"I enjoy everything about sport, from the learning nature of it straight to the competitive atmosphere," Sierra says. "I love the experiences, along with the amazing people you meet."

After days of leaping and diving at the net, she came out to collect her medal and trophy with the rest of the squad on crutches. She suffered an ankle sprain in their final match against St Augustine.

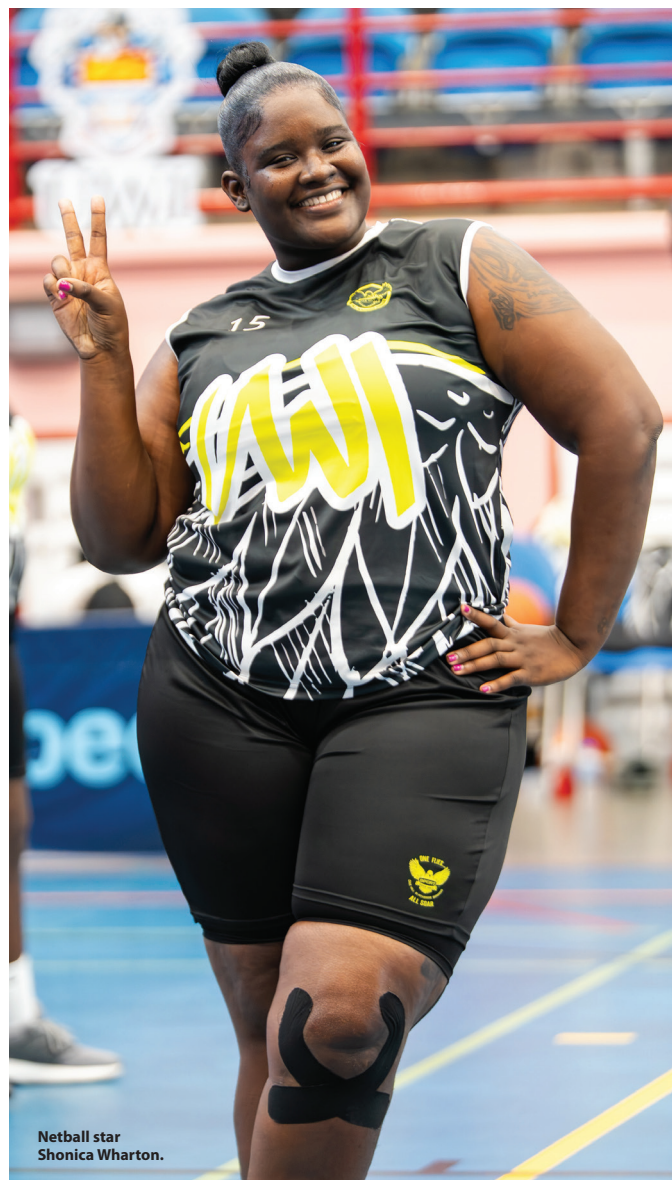
Sierra is unbothered: "I'm currently getting treatment for it back home in Barbados so I can be playing again as soon as possible."

That spirit of resilience and enthusiasm for the game was all over the indoor court, from the Cave Hill team but also their opponents, who faced the strongest of adversaries in the Blackbirds.

Dr Alleyne believes this is the purpose of sport: building character.



Sierra Rayside (third from right) and her squadmates on the Blackbirds' volleyball team receive some guidance from the coaching staff. PHOTOS: KC MEDIA LTD



Netball star Shonica Wharton.

"Sport means a lot to our young people. It teaches them many things. It teaches them values for life. We need to make sure that we provide them with sports education in schools. The character traits they learn will carry them through the rest of their lives."

For the head of the Cave Hill team, these UWI Games were very special. As only his first of the games, he is very proud of their showing. Though they did not win, they performed very well, even though several students and staff were afflicted with gastro. Perhaps his proudest moment, however, was that of a father. Dr Alleyne's daughter, Kenya Alleyne, was a member of the championship-winning hockey team. She also won the awards for top scorer and Most Valuable Player.

"My proudest moment was my daughter winning MVP for field hockey," he says.

And though the week was filled with sports, the Blackbirds still found a little time to enjoy T&T and their regional UWI family.

"The vibes were great," says Shonica. Sierra even got a chance to leave the campus and see some of the island. She visited one of the malls, enjoyed local food, and limed with other athletes. "I truly loved the T&T culture and can't wait to be back!" she says.

Dr Alleyne, having enjoyed the feeling of island fraternity at UWI Games, wants to take it further for the 2028 edition at his home campus in Barbados.

"I think we need to invite other universities from the region to be part of UWI Games," he says. "Guadeloupe, Martinique, we have UTT here, and we have other universities. We should include all our brothers and sisters and really build regional integration through sport."

That would be as stunning a performance as the Lady Blackbirds.

UWI GAMES 2026

After eight packed days of sport, sweat, and striving for victory, The UWI Games are over. Once again, the Mona campus has been crowned UWI Games champion, retaining the title from the last time the campuses met in 2019.

"I really have to give God thanks for everything, everything," says 25-year-old Abijan Anderson, captain of the Mona women's football team and co-captain of the contingent of student-athletes from the Jamaica-based campus.

"I just want to first give Jesus all the glory," she adds.

It's the final day of The UWI Games and in a few hours the university community will gather in SPEC for the results. Abijan doesn't know yet that in a few hours she will be hoisting the championship trophy on behalf of her campus and fellow Mona Pelicans. After days of hard work on the football and hockey fields (she played both sports), and hours spent cheering on her teammates from the stands, she is still energetic, and more importantly, hopeful.

"UWI games exceeded all my expectations," she says. "I love when most teams come fighting. I don't like when a team is expecting to lose. I like it when everybody comes and they want it just as much as we do."

Her co-captain, Shavar James, shares her feelings. He is the captain of the championship-winning Mona volleyball team, and would go on to win special awards for Most Valuable Player and Outside Hitter.

"The competition was right across the board," he says of the challenges the team faced in volleyball and football (his second sport).

Shavar has been a stalwart in volleyball for years, both for Jamaica and Mona Campus. He was a member of the 2019 team that placed second against Cave Hill, a loss he was deeply motivated to avenge.

"That Cave Hill match was really one that we were looking forward to, to set the tone for the rest of the competition," he says.

The Mona Pelicans defeated their rivals and took the volleyball championship trophy.

Currently pursuing his master's degree in International Public and Development Management, Shavar is already looking forward to UWI Games 2028, and hopes to continue playing for Jamaica as well.

"We should have Caribbean Championships next year. Hopefully I can be fit and make the team," he says.

Abijan is also looking forward to continuing in sport. She is vice-captain of The UWI Mona FC, a first division club in Jamaica. But she also plays several other sports: hockey, volleyball, tennis, and table tennis. She is the current, 2026 UWI Mona Sports Woman of the Year. If that doesn't sound like a massive workload, she is also pursuing her master's in Computer Science and works as a biomedical engineer.

"I use sports for my stress relief from work and study," she laughs when asked how she does it all. "It's school during the day, training during the evening, and study and homework afterwards. It's really just balancing your time and prioritising."

She is however, focused on her career, which prevents her from putting in the enormous work required to take her sport ambitions further. Although, if the Jamaican national football team were to call her, she would be excited at the prospect.

"It would be nice to represent Jamaica internationally, but I would have to come up with a game plan as to how to balance that with work," she says.

For now though, the champions have returned to their home campus and are hopefully enjoying some time off from school and sport, satisfied in their winning performance, and proud of their teammates, campus, and themselves.

MONA PELICANS, GRATEFUL IN VICTORY

BY JOEL HENRY



UWI GAMES 2026

In 2019, a few short years ago, The UWI Five Islands Campus was established in Antigua and Barbuda. Five Islands is by far the youngest and smallest landed campus of the university, but its growing fast. That growth is fueled by the higher education needs of the Eastern Caribbean, and powered by the efforts of the campus community itself— faculty, staff, and students determined to develop their young institution.

The entire university community was treated with a display of that determination during The UWI Games as the Five Islands contingent fought well above their weight class against the long-established campuses. And even though they didn't win, they represented their campus like warriors while showing familial warmth to their brothers and sisters from the region.

"It was a new experience for everybody, a learning experience for sure," says 20-year-old Bridgette Bellamy, captain of the Five Islands team.

Bridgette, now going into her second year pursuing a degree in Computer Science and Management, was part of the campus's 800-metre relay team that won the silver medal at the games.

The event, she says, was amazing; "Just being selected [as captain] was an honour."

Oshane Grant, the head of the Five Islands Campus delegation, says the experience was very good for their staff and student-athletes.

"The whole atmosphere was buzzing," he recalls. "It gave them a sense of belonging and a sense of 'UWI-ness.'"

As the newest campus, that feeling of being part of the larger university is vital, especially for an institution with its headquarters separated by the sea.

"Even though the campus is based in Antigua," Oshane says, "we have students that are not from Antigua. So, the business of interacting with other students, especially staying in the same hall as the Global Campus team, gave them an opportunity to interact with a number of persons from very different islands, backgrounds, and cultures."

As team captain, Bridgette saw it as her responsibility to make the students as comfortable as possible in Trinidad so that they could perform at their best on the field.

"For many of them, I think this was their first time travelling for sport."

It helped as well that she is from South Trinidad. In a way, she was both their captain and their host. Combined with her role as one of the team's top track athletes, it was a lot.

"It was a bit taxing," she admits. "When I felt like I should have been resting, I had to get up early to go and support the teams. I had to be catching buses up and down to try and support everybody else. By the end, my voice was gone from cheering for everybody."

On the track, she had to face intense competition from rivals from the other campuses.

"My times were not the best," she says, "but when I look back at the experience and watch the videos, I put up a fight. That 1500 [metres] was probably the most aggressive and strategic I have ever run that distance. I came 5th. Not exactly what I wanted, but it was max effort. I don't think I could have done any more."

Yet Bridgette and her teammates—Narissa Farrell-Bramble, Thauria Joseph, and Tonya Walter—refused to be discouraged and secured second place in the female 800-meter medley relay.

"We still had a fighting spirit and were ready to try our best to bring something home. And that's exactly what we did."

That spirit—whether fighting or just to fervently represent their campus—was expressed well before the team landed in Trinidad. The very act of creating and preparing a contingent to take part in the games was a big effort for a small campus.

A FIRST FOR FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS

BY JOEL HENRY

FOUR MEDALLISTS, FIVE ISLANDS: Bridgette (third from left) with her fellow silver medal-winning teammates in the 800-metre medley relay (from left) Tonya Walter, Thauria Joseph, and Narissa Farrell-Bramble.



"The first thing that we were very clear on was that we would be participating in football male and volleyball male and female, but after that, we had to put in serious effort to get the other teams going," says Oshane, himself a volleyball player who represented the Mona campus at the 2015 UWI Games.

The Five Islands campus reached out to potential donors in Antigua and Barbuda to help them fund equipment and coaching support to develop teams in several sporting disciplines. The Confucius Institute of Antigua and Barbuda, for example, donated two table tennis tables.

Even the students helped. Antigua and Barbuda national player Tyrique Thwaites not only recruited players for the Five Islands female football team, but he was also their coach during the games.

When asked about the nature of the work, Oshane described it as "putting in the infrastructure and building the teams."

They embraced the challenge: "It's the job I signed up for," he says. "It was an excellent experience."

Now they are looking forward to UWI Games 2028.

"The students are looking forward to it. I am looking forward to it. I have already been looking at how to maintain the teams and keep players together that will still be here," he says.

Oshane plans on having this year's athletes become ambassadors in their sports to get more students to enroll at the Five Islands campus and bolster their sports programmes.

If Bridgette is any example, the student-athletes are just as ready to go.

"When the next semester starts, I definitely want to have some meetings with the teams," she says. "We already have training camps for the track team planned for September. Also, we need more support in coaching and other areas. This was our first time, so getting ready for Barbados, we definitely should have more support—student volunteers, administrators."

The other campuses are on notice. UWI Games was Five Islands first outing. Next time, they are coming for first place.

UWI GAMES 2026

“We are a real callaloo pot,” says Janessa Gordon, head of the Global Campus delegation for UWI Games 2026.

In her short, lyrical description, she distils the essence of The UWI’s only online campus, an institution whose unique nature allows it to be perhaps the truest embodiment of regionalism that the university is meant to represent and serve.

The games are about excellence in sport; but they are also about the many flavours of West Indian identity and how they combine to form a society of islands and mainlands kissed by the Caribbean Sea.

In his speech at the opening ceremony of the games, UWI Vice-Chancellor Sir Hilary Beckles shared a tale of the final basketball match between Cave Hill and Mona during The UWI Games many years ago, saying that the media reported on a Barbados vs Jamaica battle.

“But in fact,” he said, “five of the Cave Hill students were Jamaicans, and four of the Mona team were Trinis. It was really, in fact, the West Indies vs the West Indies. And that is the magnificence of UWI.”

The contingent from the Global Campus included students from T&T, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Anguilla, Belize, Barbados, Grenada, St Kitts, St Vincent, Jamaica, and St Lucia. And for a campus where most people interact remotely, coming together made the experience of the games even better.

“We speak to each other every day via Zoom, email, work chat, or WhatsApp,” says Janessa. “But to physically interact with each other was very nice. It’s an experience I will always cherish.”

However, an online campus is at a disadvantage when it comes to sports, especially team sports. Players who never met were required to come together to compete against teams that have been training for months or even years. They were given a one-week pre-games camp, but that could only help them so much.

“I played with a team that I didn’t have any experience playing with,” says Pearl St John, Global Campus netball player and Sociology with a minor in Marketing student. “We had a lot of players from St Vincent and some from Grenada. They play a different style of netball. Our team essentially had to merge three different styles of play.”

At times, even communication was difficult.

“Sometimes the coach would say something and I’d have to ask him to repeat it,” says Javid Wilson, captain of the Global Campus men’s cricket team.

Javid, who is completing his degree in Management, describes how the team “came from different parts of the Caribbean and we didn’t know each other.”

This proved to be a major impediment in their early matches, but as time went on, the cricket team—and others—unified and improved their teamwork.

“We had difficult early matches, but as the tournament progressed we adapted. We were pretty competitive against Five Islands and Mona Campus,” Javid says.

Pearl also saw improvement in their team play over the eight days of the games: “It took time; and I know it’s because we only had one week to prepare. But we had meetings and worked on improving. We really showed that in our [draw] game against Five Islands. After that game, I sent a message in the group chat and congratulated the girls.”

As head of the delegation, Janessa is proud of the team and their performance:

“I saw that every one of them gave their best. They poured their hearts out. We had students who would come off the volleyball court and run to the football field. Some of them were tripling and quadrupling up in sports. That is how dedicated our students were in participating and representing our campus.”

TEAM GLOBAL CAMPUS FROM REMOTE LEARNING TO RIGHT BESIDE EACH OTHER

BY JOEL HENRY



The contingent from the Global Campus included students from T&T, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Anguilla, Belize, Barbados, Grenada, St Kitts, St Vincent, Jamaica, and St Lucia.

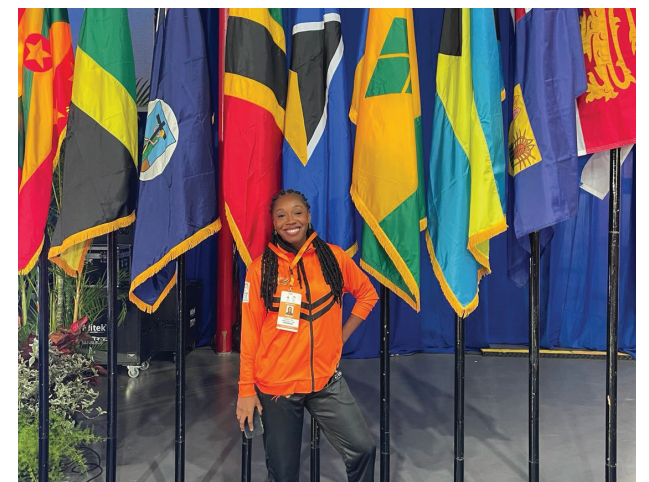
More importantly, even with the difficulties, the students enjoyed the games. So much so that they are already strategising for the 2028 games and a new era of Sport at the Global Campus. Janessa says her team has been approaching stakeholders to “streamline ideas” coming out of their experience at the games. She also has plans to approach coaches in various sports to set up clubs in the Global Campus’s various territories to make sports and team-building more a regular part of the student experience.

Javid is so enthusiastic about sport at the Global Campus that he jokingly says it influenced his decision to pursue a master’s degree this September. A sportsman from St Vincent with deep connections to the sporting community, he is also interested in advocating for more student-athletes to enroll at the campus, as well as act as coaches and trainers.

“My cousin is the national volleyball captain for St Vincent,” he says. “He’s really good; and he is 24. He



Imani Edwards Taylor (right), receives the award for Most Valuable Player in Table Tennis from Ms Amanda Best-Noel, Manager of UWI St Augustine’s Guild Administrative Office.



ONE CAMPUS, EVERY FLAG: Pearl St John, a member of The UWI Global Campus netball team, has a light moment before the heavy competition.

could make a great contribution to the Global Campus.”

Pearl, who also plays club netball in T&T with the Cardinals and works as a legal assistant, is also considering furthering her studies and playing at the next UWI Games.

“I remember telling Janessa that I am going to do a master’s degree just to come back and take part again,” she laughs. “UWI Games exceeded my expectations. I am saying this and I’m smiling right now.”

For the head of delegation, that type of feedback is what it’s all about:

“This was my first time leading the team at UWI Games,” Janessa says.

She expressed her gratitude to the administration of the Global Campus, who entrusted her with the post, and her management team. Most of all, she reaffirms the uniqueness of the campus:

“We are dispersed all over the region, we are connected, and we are a family.”

UWI GAMES 2026



CHAMPIONS IN THE COMMUNITY



The UWI Games have always been about more than sport; and on May 26, student-athletes, coaches, and volunteers moved from the campus and other sporting venues into the community to make a difference in the lives of the residents of the St Mary's Children's Home.

The UWI Games 2026 Student Athlete Outreach Initiative promoted youth empowerment, service, healthy activity, and regional co-operation.

The team, made up of participants from all five UWI campuses, allowed the children to experience different sports. They also promoted values such as discipline, teamwork, confidence, resilience, and optimism, character traits that sports can help build.

The outreach combined a resource drive for stationery and educational supplies with a multi-

sport clinic led by student-athletes and coaches. The contributions from the campuses were aligned to the needs of the home, supporting literacy, academic preparation, creative expression, early childhood learning, and secondary-level study.

UWI St Augustine led the track and field clinic, Mona facilitated cricket, Cave Hill led football, and Five Islands and Global Campus facilitated the basketball clinic. In addition, the St Augustine Advocates for Community Engagement (ACE) students supported children under six years' old as well as those with developmental disabilities through activities focused on spatial awareness, motor skills, and team-oriented play.

The initiative was also attended by members of the

UWI Games Committee, and UWI Games Chair and St Augustine Campus Deputy Principal Professor Derek Chadee.

Jehue Gordon, Olympian and Head Coach of Athletics at UWI St Augustine, led a mentorship session encouraging children to persevere, overcome challenges, balance academics and athletics, and use sport and education as pathways to opportunity.

The engagement also gave student-athletes an opportunity to lead by example. Beyond demonstrating techniques or leading activities, they connected with the children.

"Today, everybody taught somebody about something," said one athlete from the Cave Hill campus, reflecting on the mutual impact of the experience.



'Sport serves as a powerful platform for community engagement and social impact. This integral component of **The UWI Games** highlights the interconnectedness of sport and higher education as vehicles for transformation, strengthening the bonds that unite us.'

Dr Kathy-Ann Lewis, Manager of Careers, Co-Curricular and Community Engagement at the Division of Student Services and Development



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UWI GAMES 2026



A WARM WELCOME, T&T FLAVOURED

BY JOEL HENRY

It's Tuesday evening, May 26, and the games are finished for the day. Normally, after a long day of play, the student-athletes return to their halls of residence to rest and recover—but not this evening. The John F Kennedy Quadrangle, one of the central hubs of the campus, is pulsing with music, voices, and movement. The percussive power of steelpan and drums echoes off the walls and rises in the open air. High-stepping moko jumbies breathe flame and the smell of bake and shark, and doubles fills the air. Tuesday night is **Culture Night at The UWI Games.**

PHOTOS: KC MEDIA LTD



“A key part of having this sporting event is the engagement, camaraderie, and opportunity to connect between the athletes from the different campuses,” explains Julian Henry, Acting Director of UWI St Augustine’s Office of Institutional Advancement and Internationalisation and lead organiser of Culture Night.

The event, he says, was intended “to create a warm welcome for the delegations from our visiting campuses”.

Both visitors to and natives of UWI St Augustine feel the warmth.

“I really enjoyed culture night,” says Shavar James, co-captain of The UWI Mona team and captain of their gold medal-winning men’s volleyball team. “We really wanted more of these culture nights but our packed schedules and limited time frames would not have allowed it.”

Shurona, a 22-year-old Computer Science and Management student from the St Augustine Campus agrees: “It was fun and very diverse, as it covered a wide range of aspects of Trinidad and Tobago’s culture. I think it was well organised and also well-attended.”

Trinidad and Tobago culture was the theme of the event—music, food, dance, and even traditional Carnival characters.

“We wanted to ensure that we had a flavour of T&T,” says Mr Henry.

This included local street (and beach) foods such as doubles, corn soup, bake and shark, and coconut water. It meant entertainment from performers of Indian dance, The UWI Arts African Drumming Ensemble, the T&T Defence Force Steel Orchestra, and artistes Timmy and Tevin Hartman.

“I got all the local foods I was looking forward to having,” says Bridgette Bellamy, captain of the Five Islands Campus team. A Trinidadian studying in Antigua and Barbuda, she was happy to enjoy the delicacies of her homeland.

However, you don’t have to be a Trini to indulge in the island’s eats. Abijan Anderson, co-captain of the Mona team says even though she took part in Culture Night, it was “not as long as I would have wanted”.

“I was burnt out; but I went around and sampled some of the food.”

One of the most popular aspects of Culture Night was the Entrepreneurial Pop-Up Market featuring members of UWI St Augustine’s Entrepreneurship Society. Some 24 participants sold jewellery, craft items, skin creams, and food items.

“There was a whole range of entrepreneurial ideas and products on display and available for sale. These included souvenirs, keepsakes, and trinkets for the visiting athletes to purchase,” says Mr Henry.

And then there was the karaoke. The students belted out their favourite tunes in a much more lighthearted contest than the games.

“I sang back-up for the Mona team,” says Shavar. Their track? “Too Experienced” by Barrington Levy.

Mr Henry and the event management team express their gratitude for the sponsors that supported Culture Night. These included Blue Waters and ACADO Foods (distributors of Gatorade), who were the major sponsors of The UWI Games. Subway, Starbucks, Sunshine Snacks and Sundays Ice Cream all had booths where they gave out free samples. The Subway booth “offered such fun activities and mini-games that it fit perfectly into the overall occasion,” says Henry.

Bermudez had a “Crix (their brand of popular local crackers) activation,” he adds.

“What could be more Trini than that?”

Although Culture Night highlighted T&T’s culture, it was a great experience for Trinis themselves.

“I wasn’t going because I said to myself, ‘I am a Trinidadian so what is there for me to see?’ says Global Campus netball player Pearl St John. “But when I went, I was blown away.”

Perhaps most importantly, Culture Night represented the aspect of The UWI Games that transcends competition. The games are also meant to strengthen the bonds between the university’s campuses and the islands of the Caribbean.

As Global Campus cricket team captain Javid Wilson says, the most important part of UWI Games for him was that “I got to experience Trinidad’s culture. The food, the music, the people, learning different words—it was a really awesome experience.”



A key part of having this sporting event is the engagement, camaraderie, and the opportunity to connect between the athletes from the different campuses



STICKING THE LANDING



BLACKBIRD DOWN: Shakaia Kennedy, a member of The UWI Cave Hill team (known as the Blackbirds), lands strong after a long jump on May 28 at the Hasely Crawford Stadium in Port-of-Spain. Shakaia and hundreds of other student-athletes from UWI campuses throughout the region challenged each other over eight days for the UWI Games 2026 championship trophy. On the final day, after all events were completed and all awards given, the campus contingents gathered for a final celebration as one UWI family at the John F Kennedy Quadrangle on May 29. PHOTO: KC MEDIA LTD

